



APOSTLES SPEAK to Us



THE PLAN OF HAPPINESS

“Over the years I have frequently taught an important principle: the end of all activity in the Church is to see that a man and a woman with their children are happy at home, sealed together for time and for all eternity. . . .

“The commandment to multiply and replenish the earth has never been rescinded. It is essential to the plan of redemption and is the source of human happiness. Through the righteous exercise of this power, we may come close to our Father in Heaven and experience a fulness of joy, even godhood. The power of procreation is not an incidental part of the plan; it is the plan of happiness; it is the key to happiness. . . .

“The only legitimate, authorized expression of the powers of procreation is between husband and wife, a man and a woman, who have been legally and lawfully married. Anything other than this violates the commandments of God. . . .

“Reverently now I use the word temple. I envision a sealing room and an altar with a young couple kneeling there. This sacred temple ordinance is much more than a wedding, for this marriage can be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, and the scriptures declare that we ‘shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions’ (D&C 132:19). I see the joy that awaits those who accept this supernal gift and use it worthily.”

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



“It really encouraged me to hear that those who oppose family values are in the minority rather than the majority.”

Mitchell K., 16, Utah, USA



WHY MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MATTER—EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD

“We ... believe that strong traditional families are not only the basic units of a stable society, a stable economy, and a stable culture of values—but that they are also the basic units of eternity and of the kingdom and government of God....

“It is because of our belief that marriages and families are eternal that we, as a church, want to be a leader and a participant in worldwide movements to strengthen them....

“Despite what much of media and entertainment outlets may suggest, however, and despite the very real decline in the marriage and family orientation of some, the solid majority of mankind still believes that marriage should be between one man and one woman....

“We need to remind ourselves once in a while ... of the wonderfully reassuring and comforting fact that marriage and family are still the aspiration and ideal of most people and that we are not alone in those beliefs....

“We want our voice to be heard against all of the counterfeit and alternative lifestyles that try to replace the family organization that God Himself established. We also want our voice to be heard in sustaining the joy and fulfillment that traditional families bring.”

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



THE SABBATH IS A DELIGHT

“I am intrigued by the words of Isaiah, who called the Sabbath ‘a delight’ [Isaiah 58:13]. Yet I wonder, is the Sabbath really a delight for you and for me? ...

“... The Sabbath was His gift to us, granting real respite from the rigors of daily life and opportunity for spiritual and physical renewal. God gave us this special day, not for amusement or daily labor but for a rest from duty, with physical and spiritual relief....

“How can you ensure that your behavior on the Sabbath will lead to joy and rejoicing? In addition to your going to church, partaking of the sacrament, and being diligent in your specific call to serve, what other activities would help to make the Sabbath a delight for you? ...

“The Sabbath provides a wonderful opportunity to strengthen family ties....

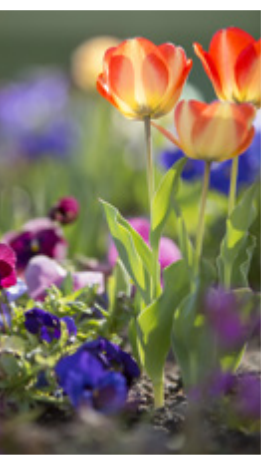
“We make the Sabbath a delight when we teach the gospel to our children....

“... Study of the gospel makes the Sabbath a delight....

“... You can experience true delight on the Sabbath from family history work....

“Make the Sabbath a delight by rendering service to others, especially those who are not feeling well or those who are lonely or in need.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



“My favorite quote was from Elder Dallin H. Oaks. We can easily become slaves to consumerism and addicted to the things of this world. We must keep feeding our faith and testimonies. We must also use social networking to uplift others across the globe that they may see light and truth.”

Laufau T., 18, New South Wales, Australia



THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

“The parable of the sower warns us of circumstances and attitudes that can keep anyone who has received the seed of the gospel message from bringing forth a goodly harvest. . . .

“The Savior’s examples could cause us to think of this parable as the parable of the soils. The suitability of the soil depends upon the heart of each one of us who is exposed to the gospel seed. In susceptibility to spiritual teachings, some hearts are hardened and unprepared, some hearts are stony from disuse, and some hearts are set upon the things of the world. . . .

“... We have the seed of the gospel word. It is up to each of us to set the priorities and to do the things that make our soil good and our harvest plentiful. We must seek to be firmly rooted and converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ (see Colossians 2:6–7). We achieve this conversion by praying, by scripture reading, by serving, and by regularly partaking of the sacrament to always have His Spirit to be with us. We must also seek that mighty change of heart (see Alma 5:12–14) that replaces evil desires and selfish concerns with the love of God and the desire to serve Him and His children.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



THE GREATEST GENERATION OF YOUNG ADULTS

“What we need now is the greatest generation of young adults in the history of the Church. We need your whole heart and soul. We need vibrant, thinking, passionate young adults who know how to listen and respond to the whisperings of the Holy Spirit as you make your way through the daily trials and temptations of being a young, contemporary Latter-day Saint.

“In other words, it’s time to raise the bar not only for missionaries but also for returned missionaries and for your entire generation. . . .

“Please use the skills you learned on your mission to bless the lives of people around you every day. Do not shift your focus from serving others to focusing exclusively on school, work, or social activities. Instead, balance your life with spiritual experiences that remind and prepare you for continued, daily ministering to others. . . .

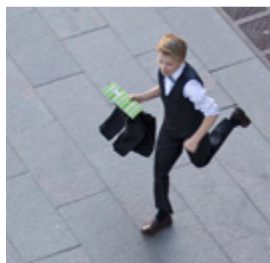
“Be strong. . . . Keep the commandments of God. The Lord Jesus Christ promises that all things we desire to do in righteousness will be ours. Church leaders are counting on you. We need every one of you young adults to prepare to marry, to serve, and to lead in the days ahead.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



"I love hearing from the Lord's servants because they teach me and warn me and counsel me to do what's right at all times, things, and places."

Shania A., 15, Utah, USA



PRESERVING AGENCY, PROTECTING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

"As we walk the path of spiritual liberty in these last days, we must understand that the faithful use of our agency depends upon our

having religious freedom. . . .

"... What can you and I do? . . .

"First, we can become informed. Be aware of issues in your community that could have an impact on religious liberty. . . .

"Second, in your individual capacity, join with others who share our commitment to religious freedom. Work side by side to protect religious freedom. . . .

"Third, live your life to be a good example of what you believe—in word and deed. How we live our religion is far more important than what we may say about our religion.

"Our Savior's Second Coming is drawing nearer. Let us not delay in this great cause. Remember Captain Moroni, who hoisted the title of liberty inscribed with the words 'In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children' [Alma 46:12]. Let us remember the people's response: exercising their agency, they 'came running together' with a covenant to act [Alma 46:21].

"My beloved brothers and sisters, don't walk! Run! Run to receive the blessings of agency by following the Holy Ghost and exercising the freedoms God has given us to do His will."

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



WHERE JUSTICE, LOVE, AND MERCY MEET

"I express my gratitude for the Atonement and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and acknowledge events in the divine plan of God that led up to and give meaning to 'the love Jesus offers [us]' ['I Stand All Amazed,' *Hymns*, no. 193].

"... We cannot fully comprehend the Atonement and Resurrection of Christ and we will not adequately appreciate the unique purpose of His birth or His death—in other words there is no way to truly celebrate Christmas or Easter—without understanding that there was an actual Adam and Eve who fell from an actual Eden, with all the consequences that fall carried with it.

"... [The] Atonement would achieve complete victory over physical death, unconditionally granting resurrection to every person who has been born or ever will be born into this world. Mercifully it would also provide forgiveness for the personal sins of all from Adam to the end of the world, conditioned upon repentance and obedience to divine commandments. . . .

"So today [on Easter] we celebrate the gift of victory over every fall we have ever experienced, every sorrow we have ever known, every discouragement we have ever had, every fear we have ever faced—to say nothing of our resurrection from death and forgiveness for our sins. That victory is available to us because of events that transpired on a weekend precisely like this nearly two millennia ago in Jerusalem."

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



“Even though I won’t be a wife or mother for a while, conference helped me understand teamwork between a husband and wife and raising a righteous family. It gave me a better understanding of what makes a good family.”

Camille O., 14, Utah, USA



THEREFORE THEY HUSHED THEIR FEARS

“Trust and confidence in Christ and a ready reliance on His merits, mercy, and grace lead to hope, through His Atonement, in the Resurrection and eternal life (see Moroni 7:41). Such faith and hope invite into our lives the sweet peace of conscience for which we all yearn. The power of the Atonement makes repentance possible and quells the despair caused by sin; it also strengthens us to see, do, and become good in ways that we could never recognize or accomplish with our limited mortal capacity. Truly, one of the great blessings of devoted discipleship is ‘the peace of God, which passeth all understanding’ (Philippians 4:7).

“The peace Christ gives allows us to view mortality through the precious perspective of eternity and supplies a spiritual settledness (see Colossians 1:23) that helps us maintain a consistent focus on our heavenly destination. Thus, we can be blessed to hush our fears because His doctrine provides purpose and direction in all aspects of our lives. His ordinances and covenants fortify and comfort in times both good and bad. And His priesthood authority gives assurance that the things that matter most can endure both in time and in eternity.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



THE LORD IS MY LIGHT

“If the grim realities you are facing at this time seem dark and heavy and almost unbearable, remember that in the soul-wrenching darkness of Gethsemane and the incomprehensible torture and pain of Calvary, the Savior accomplished the Atonement, which resolves the most terrible burdens that can occur in this life. He did it for you, and He did it for me. He did it because He loves us and because He obeys and loves His Father. We will be rescued from death—even from the depths of the sea.

“Our protections in this life and for eternity will be in individual and family righteousness, Church ordinances, and following the Savior. This is our refuge from the storm. For those who feel they are alone, you can stand resolutely in righteousness knowing that the Atonement will protect and bless you beyond your ability to fully understand.

“We should remember the Savior, keep our covenants, and follow the Son of God as the young sunflower follows the sunshine. Following His light and example will bring us joy, happiness, and peace. As Psalm 27 and a favorite hymn both proclaim, ‘The Lord is my light and my salvation’ [Psalm 27:1; see also ‘The Lord Is My Light,’ *Hymns*, no. 89].”

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



“Because of general conference, I will strive to go to the temple more often and to turn off my mobile devices to spend more time with my family.”

Haley J., 14, Utah, USA



WHY MARRIAGE, WHY FAMILY

“A family built on the marriage of a man and woman supplies the best setting for God’s plan to thrive—the setting for the birth of children, who come in purity and innocence from God, and the environment for the learning and preparation they will need for a successful mortal life and eternal life in the world to come. A critical mass of families built on such marriages is vital for societies to survive and flourish. That is why communities and nations generally have encouraged and protected marriage and the family as privileged institutions. It has never been just about the love and happiness of adults.

“The social science case for marriage and for families headed by a married man and woman is compelling. And so ‘we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets’ [‘The Family: A Proclamation to the World,’ *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129]. But our claims for the role of marriage and family rest not on social science but on the truth that they are God’s creation. . . . Each individual carries the divine image, but it is in the matrimonial union of male and female that we attain perhaps the most complete meaning of our having been in the image of God—male and female.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



THY KINGDOM COME

“We live in days of wars and rumors of wars, days of natural disasters, days when the world is pulled by confusion and commotion.

“But we also live in the glorious time of the Restoration, when the gospel is being taken to all the world. . . .

“... Seeing and believing the Lord’s miracles in establishing His kingdom on earth can help us see and believe that the Lord’s hand is at work in our own lives as well.

“The Lord declared, ‘I am able to do mine own work’ [2 Nephi 27:21]. We each try to do our part, but He is the grand architect. Under the direction of His Father, He created this world. ‘All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made’ [John 1:3]. . . .

“As you keep the commandments and pray in faith to see the Lord’s hand in your life, I promise you that He will open your spiritual eyes even wider, and you will see more clearly that you are not alone. . . .

“Our faith grows as we anticipate the glorious day of the Savior’s return to the earth. . . .

“May we prepare His coming, . . . and may His prayer be our prayer: ‘Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven’ [Matthew 6:10].”

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles